Tafsir Ibn Kathir

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لاَ رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah

Al-Inshiqaq

Revealed in Makkah

The Prostration of Recitation in Surat Al-Inshiqaq

It is reported from Abu Salamah that while leading them in prayer, Abu Hurayrah recited, إِذَا السَّمَآءُ انشَقَّتْ (When the heaven is split asunder) and he prostrated during its recitation. Then when he completed the prayer, he informed them that the Messenger of Allah prostrated during its recitation.

This was recorded by Muslim and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Malik.

Al-Bukhari recorded from Abu Rafi` that he prayed the Night prayer with Abu Hurayrah) recited, إِذَا السَّمَآءُ انشَقَّتْ (When the heaven is split asunder) then he prostrated. So Abu Rafi` said something to him about it (questioning it). Abu Hurayrah replied,

> "I prostrated behind Abul-Qasim (the Prophet), and I will never cease prostrating during its recitation until I meet him.''

بِسْمِ اللّهِ الرَّحْمَـنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

إِذَا السَّمَآءُ انشَقَّتْ

84:1 When the heaven is split asunder,

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ

84:2 And listens to and obeys its Lord -- and it must do so.

وَإِذَا الاٌّرْضُ مُدَّتْ

84:3 And when the earth is stretched forth,

وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ

84:4 And has cast out all that was in it and became empty.

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ

84:5 And listens to and obeys its Lord -- and it must do so.

يأَيُّهَا الإِنسَـنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَدْحاً فَمُلَـقِيهِ

84:6 O man! Verily, you are returning towards your Lord with your deeds and actions, a sure returning, and you will meet.

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَـبَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ

84:7 Then as for him who will be given his Record in his right hand,

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَاباً يَسِيراً

84:8 He surely will receive an easy reckoning,

وَيَنقَلِبُ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُوراً

84:9 And will return to his family Masrur (in joy)!

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَـبَهُ وَرَآءَ ظَهْرِهِ

84:10 But whosoever is given his Record behind his back,

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُو ثُبُوراً

84:11 He will invoke destruction,

وَيَصْلَى سَعِيراً

84:12 And he shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning.

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِى أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُوراً

84:13 Verily, he was among his people in joy!

إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَن لَّن يَحُورَ

84:14 Verily, he thought that he would never return!

بَلَى إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ بِهِ بَصِيراً

84:15 Yes! Verily, his Lord has been ever beholding him!)

Splitting the Heavens asunder and stretching the Earth forth on the Day of Resurrection

Allah says,

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَّتْ (١)

When the heaven is split asunder,

This refers to the Day of Judgement.

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا ...

And listens to and obeys its Lord,

meaning, it listens to its Lord and obeys His command to split apart. This will occur on the Day of Judgement.

... وَحُقَّتْ (٢)

and it must do so.

meaning, it is right for it to obey the command of its Lord, because it is great and cannot be rejected, nor overcome. Rather it overpowers everything and everything is submissive to it.

Then Allah says,

وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ (٣)

And when the earth is stretched forth,

meaning, when the earth is expanded, spread out and extended.

Then He says,

وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ (٤)

And has cast out all that was in it and became empty.

meaning, it throws out the dead inside of it, and it empties itself of them.

This was said by Mujahid, Sa`id, and Qatadah.

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ (٥)

And listens to and obeys its Lord, and it must do so.

The explanation of this is the same as what has preceded.

The Recompense for Deeds is True

Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا ...

O man!

Verily, you are returning towards your Lord with your deeds and actions, a sure returning,

meaning, `verily you are hastening to your Lord and working deeds.'

... فَمُلَاقِيهِ (٦)

and you will meet.

`Then you will meet that which you did of good or evil.'

A proof for this is what Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi recorded from Jabir, that the Messenger of Allah said,

قَالَ جِبْرِيلُ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ،

عِشْ مَا شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ،

وَأَحْبِبْ (مَنْ) شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مُفَارِقُهُ،

وَاعْمَلْ مَا شِئْتَ فَإِنَّكَ مُلَاقِيه

Jibril said, "O Muhammad!

- Live how you wish, for verily you will die;
- love what you wish, for verily you will part with it;
- and do what you wish, for verily you will meet it (your deed).

There are some people who refer the pronoun back to the statement "your Lord.''

Thus, they hold the **Ayah** to mean, "and you will meet your Lord.''

This means that He will reward you for your work, and pay you for your efforts. Therefore, both of these two views are connected.

Al-`Awfi recorded from Ibn Abbas that he said explaining, يأَيُّهَا الإِنسَـنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَدْحاً (O man! Verily, you are returning towards your Lord with your deeds and actions, a sure returning),

> "Whatever deed you do, you will meet Allah with it, whether it is good or bad.''

The Presentation and the Discussion that will take place during the Reckoning

Then Allah says,

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ (٧)

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا (٨)

Then as for him who will be given his Record in his right hand, he surely, will receive an easy reckoning,

> meaning, easy without any difficulty.
>
> This means that he will not be investigated for all the minute details of his deeds. For verily, whoever is reckoned like that, he will certainly be destroyed.

Imam Ahmad recorded from A'ishah that the Messenger of Allah said,

مَنْ نُوقِشَ الْحِسَابَ عُذِّب

> Whoever is interrogated during the reckoning, then he will be punished.

A'ishah then said, "But didn't Allah say, فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَاباً يَسِيراً (He surely will receive an easy reckoning),''

The Prophet replied,

لَيْسَ ذَاكِ بِالْحِسَابِ، وَلَـكِنْ ذلِكِ الْعَرْضُ، مَنْ نُوقِشَ الْحِسَابَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عُذِّب

> That is not during to the Reckoning, rather it is referring to the presentation. Whoever is interrogated during the Reckoning on the Day of Judgement, then he will be punished.

This **Hadith** has also been recorded by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Jarir.

In reference to Allah's statement,

وَيَنقَلِبُ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا (٩)

And will return to his family **Masrur**!

> This means that he will return to his family in Paradise.
>
> This was said by Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak.

They also said,

> "**Masrur** means happy and delighted by what Allah has given him.''

Allah said;

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاء ظَهْرِهِ (١٠)

But whosoever is given his Record behind his back,

> meaning, he will be given his Book in his left hand, behind his back, while his hand is bent behind him.

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُو ثُبُورًا (١١)

He will invoke destruction,

> meaning, loss and destruction.

وَيَصْلَى سَعِيرًا (١٢)

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا (١٣)

And he shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning. Verily, he was among his people in joy!

meaning, happy. He did not think about the consequences, nor feared what (future) was in front of him. His light happiness will be followed by long grief.

إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَن لَّن يَحُورَ (١٤)

Verily, he thought that he would never return!

meaning, he used to believe that he would not return to Allah, nor would Allah bring him back (to life) after his death.

This was said by Ibn Abbas, Qatadah and others.

Allah then says,

بَلَى إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ بِهِ بَصِيرًا (١٥)

Yes! Verily, his Lord has been ever beholding him!

meaning, certainly Allah will repeat his creation just as he began his creation, and He will reward him based upon his deeds, whether they were good or bad.

He was ever watchful of him,

meaning All-Knowing and All-Aware.

فَلاَ أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ

84:16 But no! I swear by Ash-Shafaq;

وَٱلَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ

84:17 And the night and what it Wasaqa,

وَٱلْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ

84:18 And the moon when it Ittasaq.

لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقاً عَن طَبقٍ

84:19 You shall certainly travel from stage to stage.

فَمَا لَهُمْ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ

84:20 What is the matter with them, that they believe not

وَإِذَا قُرِىءَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْءَانُ لاَ يَسْجُدُونَ

84:21 And when the Qur'an is recited to them, they fall not prostrate.

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ يُكَذِّبُونَ

84:22 Nay, those who disbelieve deny.

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ

84:23 And Allah knows best what they gather,

فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

84:24 So, announce to them a painful torment.

إِلاَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ الصَّـلِحَـتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ

84:25 Save those who believe and do righteous good deeds, for them is a reward that will never come to an end.

Swearing by the Various Stages of Man's Journey

Allah swears,

فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ (١٦)

But no! I swear by **Ash-Shafaq**;

It has been reported from Ali, Ibn Abbas, Ubadah bin As-Samit, Abu Hurayrah, Shaddad bin Aws, Ibn Umar, Muhammad bin Ali bin Al-Husayn, Makhul, Bakr bin Abdullah Al-Muzani, Bukayr bin Al-Ashaj, Malik, Ibn Abi Dhi'b, and Abdul Aziz bin Abi Salamah Al-Majishun, they all said,

> "**Ash-Shafaq** is the redness (in the sky).

Abdur-Razzaq recorded from Abu Hurayrah that he said,

> "**Ash-Shafaq** is the whiteness.''

So **Ash-Shafaq** is the redness of the horizon, either before sunset, as Mujahid said or after sunset, as is well known with the scholars of the Arabic Language.

Al-Khalil bin Ahmad said,

> **"Ash-Shafaq** is the redness that appears from the setting of sun until the time of the last `**Isha'** (when it is completely dark). When that redness goes away, it is said, **Ash-Shafaq** has disappeared.'''

Al-Jawhari said,

> "**Ash-Shafaq** is the remaining light of the sun and its redness at the beginning of the night until it is close to actual nighttime (darkness).''

Ikrimah made a similar statement when he said,

> "**Ash-Shafaq** is that what is between **Al-Maghrib** and **Al-Isha'**.''

In the Sahih of Muslim, it is recorded from Abdullah bin Amr that the Messenger of Allah said,

وَقْتُ الْمَغْرِبِ مَا لَمْ يَغِبِ الشَّفَق

> the time of **Al-Maghrib** is as long as **Ash-Shafaq** has not disappeared.''

In all of this, there is a proof that **Ash-Shafaq** is as Al-Jawhari and Al-Khalil have said.

وَاللَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ (١٧)

And by the night and what it **Wasaqa**,

Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Al-Hasan and Qatadah, all said that, وَمَا وَسَقَ and what it **Wasaqa** means,

> "What it gathers.''

Qatadah said, "The stars and animals it gathers.''

Ikrimah said,

> "What it drives into due to its darkness, because when it is nighttime everything goes to its home.''

Concerning Allah's statement,

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ (١٨)

And by the moon when it **Ittasaqa**.

Ibn Abbas said,

> "When it comes together and becomes complete.''

Al-Hasan said,

> "When it comes together and becomes full.''

Qatadah said,

> "When it completes its cycle.''

These statements refer to its light when it is completed and becomes full, as the idea was initiated with "The night and what it gathers.''

Allah said,

لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَن طَبَقٍ (١٩)

You shall certainly travel from stage to stage.

Al-Bukhari recorded from Mujahid that Ibn Abbas said,

> "Stage after stage. Your Prophet has said this.''

Al-Bukhari recorded this statement with this wording. Ikrimah said, طَبَقاً عَن طَبقٍ (From stage to stage).

> "Stage after stage. Weaned after he was breast feeding, and an old man after he was a young man.''

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, طَبَقاً عَن طَبقٍ (From stage to stage).

> "Stage after stage.
>
> - Ease after difficulty,
> - difficulty after ease,
> - wealth after poverty,
> - poverty after wealth,
> - health after sickness, and
> - sickness after health.''

The Disapproval of Their Lack of Faith, giving Them Tidings of the Torment, and that the Ultimate Pleasure will be for the Believers

Allah said,

فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٢٠)

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ (٢١)

What is the matter with them, that they believe not? And when the Qur'an is recited to them, they fall not prostrate.

> meaning, what prevents them from believing in Allah, His Messenger and the Last Day, and what is wrong with them that when Allah's Ayat and His Words are recited to them they do not prostrate due to awe, respect and reverence.

Concerning Allah's statement,

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُكَذِّبُونَ (٢٢)

Nay, those who disbelieve deny.

> meaning, from their mannerism is rejection, obstinacy, and opposition to the truth.

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ (٢٣)

And Allah knows best what they gather,

Mujahid and Qatadah both said,

> "What they conceal in their chests.''

فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ (٢٤)

So, announce to them a painful torment.

> meaning, `inform them, O Muhammad, that Allah has prepared for them a painful torment.'

Then Allah says,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ...

Save those who believe and do righteous good deeds,

> This is a clear exception meaning, `but those who believe.'
>
> This refers to those who believe in their hearts.
>
> Then the statement, "and do righteous good deeds,'' is referring to that which they do with their limbs.

... لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ ...

for them is a reward,

> meaning, in the abode of the Hereafter.

... غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ (٢٥)

that will never come to an end.

Ibn Abbas said,

"Without being decreased.''

Mujahid and Ad-Dahhak both said,

"Without measure.''

The result of their statements is that it (the reward) is without end.

This is as Allah says,

عَطَآءً غَيْرَ مَجْذُوذٍ

A gift without an end. (11:108)

As-Suddi said,

"Some of them have said that this means without end and without decrease.''

This is the end of the Tafsir of Surah **Al-Inshiqaq**. All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and He is the giver of success and freedom from error.